

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

February 2021



www.firstdefenderscwrts.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the Christian faith, we ask God, "...to forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." This teaches we need to forgive the sins of others in order for our own sins to be forgiven.

Following the hell that was the American Civil War, it would seem almost impossible for the Northern victors to forgive the defeated South for the pain and suffering endured over four years of conflict. Yet forgive they did, albeit sometimes imperfectly, as the warring foes worked together to build a new nation "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

The post-war years were hardly idyllic, and simmering hatreds and animosity continued then and, some would argue, have to this day. Yet it is instructive to note many leading Confederates would become American patriots once again. John Brown Gordon, third in command of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox, would serve in the U.S. Senate as would cavalry commander Wade Hampton. The fourth-highest ranking southern general, Joseph E. Johnston, would become a United States congressman as would former Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens. Cavalry officers Fitzhugh Lee and Joseph Wheeler would return to the U.S. military as generals before the end of the 19th Century. These examples are not mere outliers; thousands of former rebels would once again become patriots for the United States.

Men who fought in southern armies would go on to government work, return to the army and navy and become leaders in science, education, commerce and industry as the nation was re-established and poised to become a world power. None of which could have happened had there not been a national consensus to "forgive."

Just over two months ago, President Joseph Biden assumed the office of President of the United States with a call for unity. Thusfar, this seems more of a "voice calling from the wilderness" that has largely gone unheard. Unity today necessarily requires learning the forgiveness expressed by our forebears who brought this nation back from a far darker place than most of us have seen in our lifetimes. Really, forgiving "those who trespass against us" isn't that hard if we want. And we can always look heavenward for help.

Craig

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT meeting and program scheduled for February 9th was cancelled due to inclement weather. Our program on Dr. Mary Walker featuring Hallie Vaughan will be re-scheduled for the upcoming Silver Anniversary Campaign that will kick off in September.

In place of our regularly-scheduled event, President Breneiser presented a virtual tour of Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas which is somewhat off the beaten track and not visited by many Civil War enthusiasts. A dozen members were in attendance.

March Program:

From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864

featuring Phil Greenwalt

The pivotal Red River Campaign in the Trans-Mississippi theater was fought by Union General Nathaniel Banks' army with naval support from Admiral David Porter's flotilla against Confederate General Richard Taylor's Army of Western Louisiana. Largely eclipsed by events east of the Mississippi River, the fighting along the Red River and bayous of western Louisiana had an adverse impact on Union grand strategy in 1864. What transpired resulted in a tactical Confederate victory that was nullified due to command issues and competing visions within the high command. The ramifications of only limited success would reverberate across the Confederacy to as far as the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in 1864.



Phillip S. Greenwalt is co-founder of Emerging Revolutionary War and the Emerging Revolutionary War Series as well as a full-time contributor to Emerging Civil War. He is the co-author of three volumes of the Emerging Civil War Series and two volumes of the inaugural volumes of the Emerging Revolutionary War Series.



Phill has a graduate degree in American History from George Mason University and a bachelor's in history from Wheeling Jesuit University. He is currently a Supervisory Park Ranger for Everglades National Park. He is a native of Baltimore, Maryland.

Note: *Phill will be presenting this program virtually!*

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, March 9th Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for March include: Broiled Orange Roughy; Chicken Parmesan; or Cheese Tortellini. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY March 5, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

IMPORTANT NOTE Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations for any reasons after noon on the TUESDAY preceding the meeting. This is the policy of Giannotti's, and the Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation and not cancelled prior to the aforementioned time period.

****PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

24th Campaign Upcoming Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>